THE BROWN BESS LOADING AND FIRING INSTRUCTIONS

BULLET CASTING

Use a round ball bullet mould of the calibre of your weapon if you wish to shoot the ball without a patch, but for accuracy we recommend that the ball should be 'patched' so that it fits into the bore as tightly as possible to prevent gas escape as it travels along the barrel. Under these circumstances we recommend a bullet mould about .005" smaller than the calibre of the weapon.

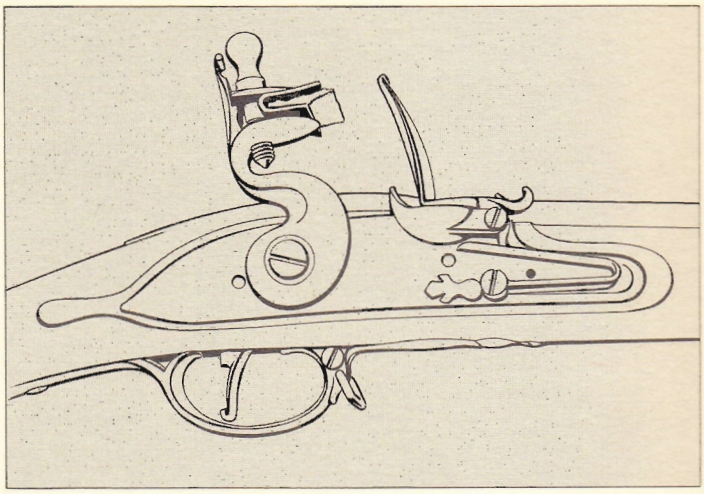
To cast satisfactory bullets the mould has to reach a constant temperature. If the mould is too cool the ball will appear wrinkled on the surface and if it or the lead is too hot then the ball will take too long to set and will probably have a hole in it at the position of the pouring sprue. Practice will soon show you the correct procedure, but you will need the following equipment : a bullet mould, a lead dipper, a wad of cloth or newspaper, a cast iron lead or paint pot, a wooden stick (an old hammer handle would do).

Procedure : melt the lead (note for muzzle loaders—always use pure lead, not alloy) in the cast iron pot but not in a position where you could accidentaly upset the pot with your elbow during subsequent operations. When the lead is molten take a dipper full in your right hand and with the mould held in your left hand (over the lead pot) engage the nozzle of the dipper with the sprue hole in the mould holding both in a horizontal position. Turn them vertically holding them together and this allows the lead to run into the mould without splashing. Remove the mould and open it over the paper. Tap the bullet out onto the soft surface with a piece of wood. Cut off the sprue.
N.B. Never hit the mould with anything harder than wood. You may have to discard the first few bullets until the mould is hot enough.

LOADING AND FIRING

We can give no hard and fast rule about powder charges to use, but always use black powder of grade FFG or FFFG. A process of trial and error will tell you the correct charge for your purposes. As a rule of thumb guide however, it used to be the practice to lay the ball on the palm of the hand and pour powder on until it was covered.

(i) Ensure that the barrel is free from oil or grease before firing in the first place.



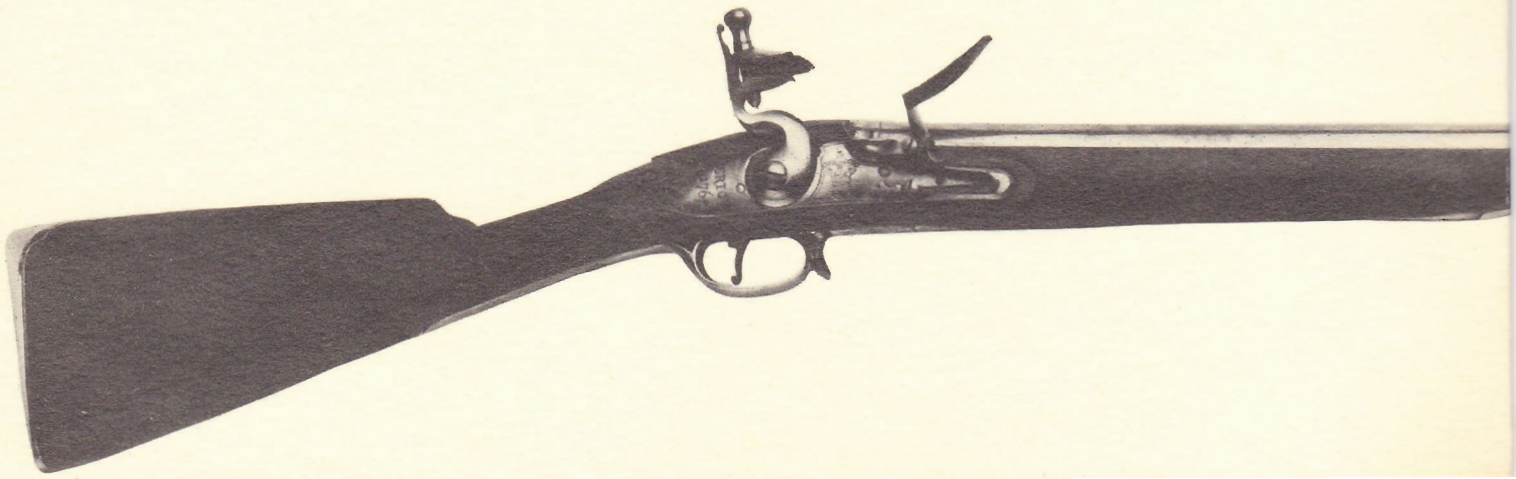
(ii) Put the lock on half cock and close the pan cover. Blowing down the barrel at this stage will help you to ascertain that touch hole is free. If you cannot blow down the barrel there are two possibilities : (a) the touch hole may be blocked, in which case clean it with a pin or piece of wire, or (b) the weapon may be loaded. If the latter, find our immediately why this should be the case and resolve never ever to let it happen again.

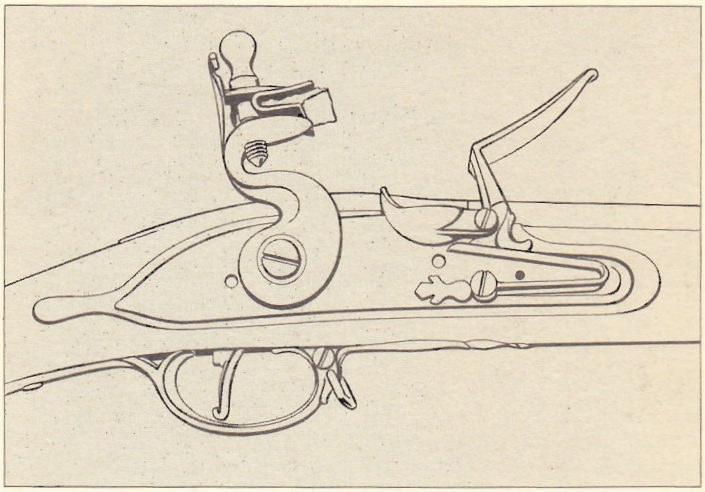
(iii) Remove the ramrod and pour your powder charge down the barrel. Then place either a ready cut patch, or a square of linen, over the muzzle, place the ball on it pressing it down into the bore (if necessary trim off the excess patch with a sharp knife across the muzzle). Using the ramrod push the ball and patch down on to the powder charge and seat firmly, but do not ram too viciously.

(iv) Replace ramrod.

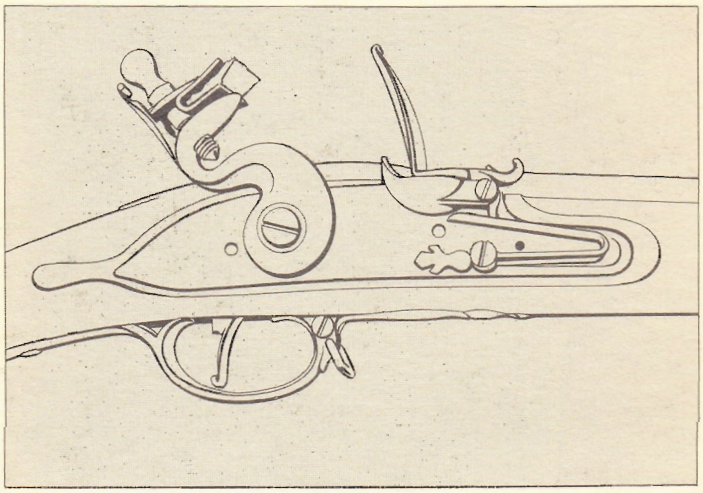
(v) Holding the gun in the left hand, and pointing the muzzle safely down range, flip open the pan cover and prime with some small grained black powder (you will probably find that some powder has spilled out of the touch hole into the pan already).
N.B. Do not use too much powder for priming as this can contribute to flinching.

(vi) Close the pan cover.





(vii) Fully cock the weapon when you are ready to fire.



Flints : The flint is a vital part of the weapon and should be kept in good condition and replaced when necessary. It is held in position between the jaws of the cock with a small oblong of leather round it. This also helps to protect the top jaw screw from the back edge of the flint. The flint is normally placed with its longer flat face uppermost, but we suggest that you experiment to find the position of the flint which will give the most satisfactory spark consistently.

CLEANING

Wherever possible remove the barrel from the stock by removing the tang screw and knocking out the retaining pins with the aid of a flat nosed punch or small nail with the point ground off. Wherever possible, remove the breech plug as follows :—

Clamp the barrel firmly in a vice protecting it from the jaws either by two pieces of wood, sheet lead etc. With a shifting spanner grasp the tenon of the breech plug (this runs across the diameter of it) and a sharp tap with a hammer should be sufficient to loosen all but the most stubborn plugs. If this is done regularly and a little oil put on the threads for returning the breech plug, it will prevent that commonest of all muzzle loading problems, the rusted in breech plug which is almost impossible to move.

Scrub out the barrel with a phosphor bronze or bristle brush using plenty of hot soapy water, and when you are satisfied that all the black powder residue has been removed wash out with clean hot water and allow the barrel to dry on its end, slowly.

Any parts of the gun which have suffered black powder fouling such as the lock should be carefully cleaned and oiled before storing, but we suggest that you do not oil the inside of the barrel at all. If you do wish to oil it give it only the lightest of coatings of a good rust preventative such as WD 40. If the steel work of the barrel is left unblued (such as the Brown Bess) it will have a tendency to rust unless given a light coating of rust preventative.

SAFETY PRECAUTIONS

1. Always point the weapon in a safe direction especially when loading.

2. Do not load too fast after firing one shot. There could be a spark smouldering in the barrel which might set off your powder as you load it.

3. Always measure the charge into the barrel—never pour it ad lib from the flask or powder horn.

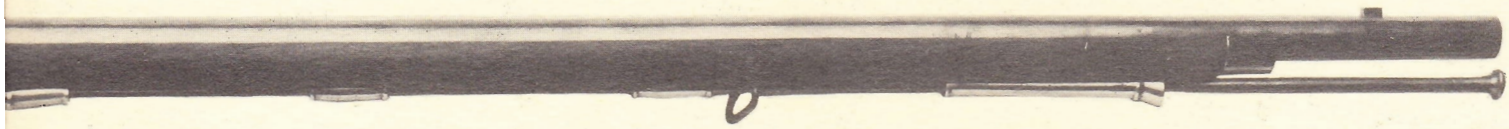
4. Do not smoke while handling powder.

5. Concentrate on what you are doing—be careful not to load two charges through carelessness or lack of attention.

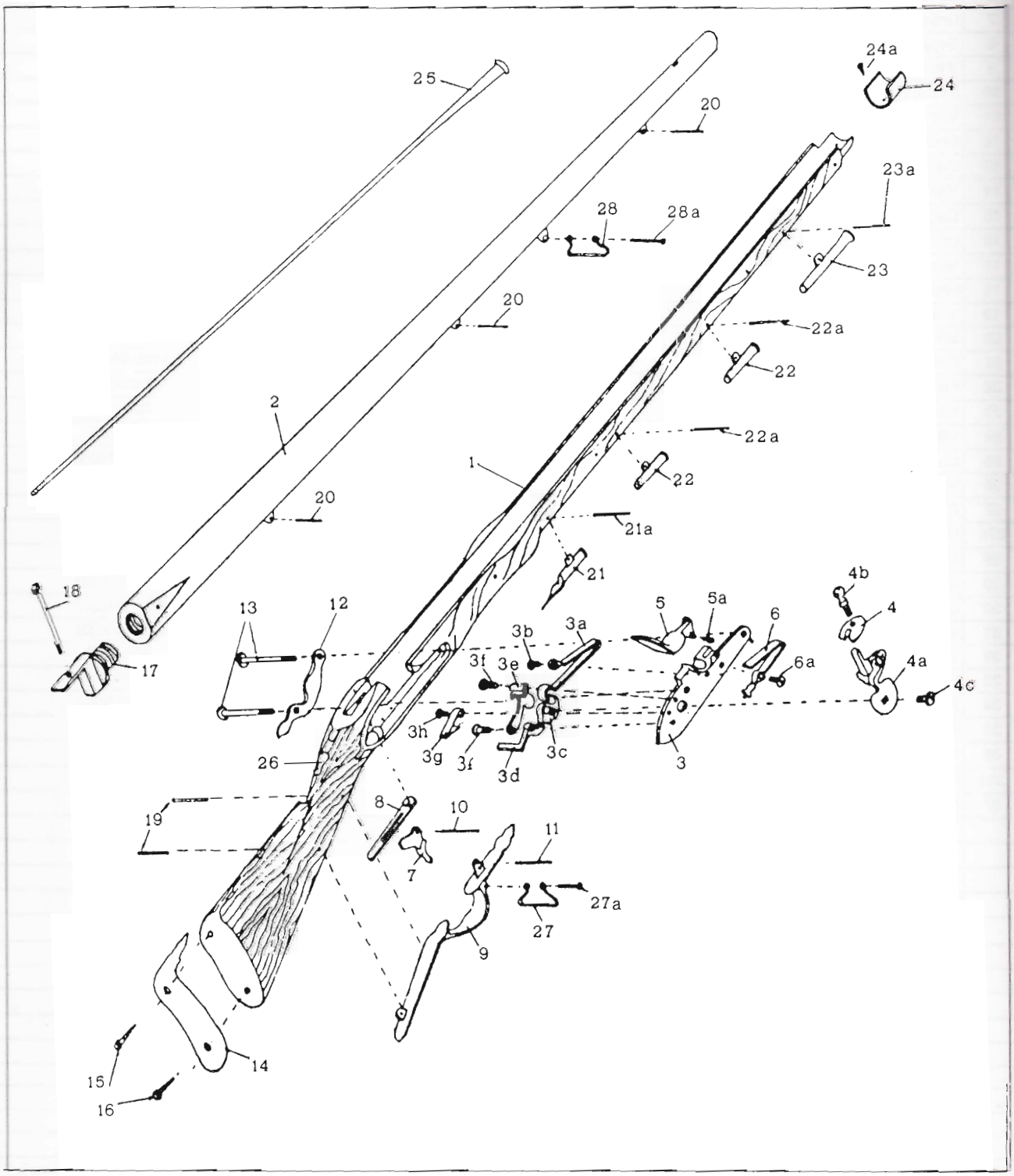
6. Wear shooting glasses or some form of eye protection as burning powder grain can be unpleasant and dangerous.

Misfires

If you get a 'flash in the pan' or a complete misfire pause for a few seconds before trying again. Hang fires have been known with the resultant delayed action discharges. When you are satisfied the weapon is not going to go off re-prime the pan (if necessary) and try again. Repeated misfires mean the flint is either dirty, worn out or badly positioned. Repeated flashes in the pan mean that the weapon hole needs pricking out. At all times handle the weapon with the care which you would accord to any loaded weapon.



Fucile Brown Bess
Brown Bess Musket



	Nomenclatura / List		Rif. Fabbrica/Factory Ref
No.	Italiano	English	D. PEDERSOLI
1	Legno semifinito	Stock semifinished	M870003421
1bis	Legno semifinito - carabina	Stock semifinished - carbine version	M870003420
2	Canna	Barrel	M860002495
2bis	Canna versione carabina	Barrel carbine version	M860002493
3	Cartella	Lock plate	M850002496
3a	Molla cane	Main spring	M850003639
3b	Vite molla cane	Main spring screw	260 - 3B
3c	Noce	Tumbler	M850003910
3d	Leva scatto	Sear	M850003422
3e	Braghetta	Bridle	M850002217
3f	Vite braghetta	Bridle screw	260 - 3F
3g	Molla leva scatto	Sear spring	M850003640
3h	Vite molla leva scatto	Sear spring screw	260 - 3H
4	Cane	Hammer	M850002497
4a	Premipietra	Top jaw	M850004241
4b	Vite premipietra	Top jaw screw	260 - 4B
4c	Vite cane	Hammer screw	260 - 4C
5	Martellina	Frizzen	M850002498
5a	Vite martellina	Frizzen screw	260 - 5A
6	Molla martellina	Frizzen spring	M850003641
6a	Vite molla martellina	Frizzen spring screw	260 - 6A
7	Grilletto	Trigger	M880003033
8	Sottoguardia	Trigger plate	M880004619
9	Guardamano	Trigger guard	M870003034
10	Coppiglia grilletto	Trigger pin	260 - 10
11	Coppiglia guardamano	Trigger guard pin	260 - 11
12	Fregio	Side plate	M870002912
13	Vite fregio	Side plate screw	260 - 13
14	Calciolo	Butt plate	M870002499
15	Vitiecalciolo	Butt plate screw	260 - 15
16	Vite calciolo	Butt plate screw	260 - 15
17	Culatta	Breech plug	M860004868
18	Vite canna - sottoguardia	Barrel trigger plate screw	260 - 18
19	Coppiglia guardamano	Trigger guard pin	260 - 19
20	Coppiglia fermo canna	Barrel pin	260 - 20
21	Ghiera posteriore	Ramrod rear pipe	M870003035
21a	Coppiglia ghiera posteriore	Ramrod rear pipe pin	260 - 21A
22	Ghiera intermedia	Ramrod center pipe	M870003036
22a	Coppiglia ghiera intermedia	Ramrod center pipe pin	260 - 22A
23	Ghiera anteriore	Ramrod front pipe	M870003037
23a	Coppiglia ghiera anteriore	Ramrod front pipe pin	260 - 23A
24	Fascetta canna	Barrel band	M870002913
24a	Vite fascetta canna	Barrel band screw	260 - 24A
25	Bacchetta	Ramrod	M870002218
25bis	Bacchetta - -versione carabina	Ramrod - carbine version	M870002219
26	Scudetto	Escutcheon	M870004620
27	Maglietta posteriore	Rear sling swiwel	M870003643
27a	Vite maglietta posteriore	Rear sling swiwel screw	260 - 27A
28	Maglietta anteriore	Front sling swiwel	M870003642
28a	Vite maglietta anteriore	Front sling swiwel screw	260 - 28A